

The Mackey Expedition to  
Santa Cruz Island  
July 1, 1912.

Members of the Expedition

Edward M. Mackey  
William A. Brewster  
Wheaton Hale Brewer  
Keith Johnston  
Rosaline Vasquez (Skipper)  
Fred William Smith (Shorty)  
Nick (not Nicholas) Bermudas

We started (Mackey, the Brewers and Johnston from San Ysidro Ranch, Monday morning July 1, 1912, at 6:30 A.M., after a bountiful breakfast. Wheaton Brewer ate breakfast enough for the entire party, and then the others ate some.

Mr. Harleigh Johnston took me to Santa Barbara in the automobile, and at the wharf we found Captain Vasquez with his brave crew - thirty first mate and back the crew. At eight in the morning we started, a calm sea, with fog overhead.

Keith and Wheaton began a game of cards as our schooner launched the Gussie. We got her propeller under way. The game had hardly gotten under way before Wheaton gazed bristlingly upon the water, cards fell unheeded upon the deck, and Keith began to look green around the gills. Four lines - five lines - Wheaton paid tribute to Neptune on the way over. It was a

case of sea-sickness and home-sickness combined -

Soon Santa Barbara and the mainland faded from sight and for an hour we could see water only on every side. When we started we put up the ~~main~~ foresail, but there was hardly enough wind to fill her. At ten o'clock a westerly breeze sprang up, and we hoisted the mainsail. Both sails filled out with a fishing wind, helping us to the limit of a mile and home. The trip across is 26 miles. By ten o'clock we could see the Island - north high mountains covered with grass and timber - a few pines, and oaks in the canyons. The skipper



Wes in that Santa Cruz Island is  
25 miles e. + w. + 8 1/2 miles n. + s.  
The Island is owned by Justin in Care  
of S.F. some herd of sheep - all  
have been sold but 6 are saved at  
this time being taken to the mainland  
on a steam-scholarship.

As we neared the island we  
could see the precipitous cliffs  
of dark rock, with many caves  
and the waves dashing high.

And at about eleven o'clock we  
came into a beautiful ~~small~~ cove  
with a gravel beach between high  
cliffs of dark rock! In quiet  
water we cast anchor after  
taking in tow 2 skiffs that Vargay  
keeps there anchored to a buoy.

Up from the beach a canyon  
extends to the ridge, beautiful

wooded with oaks, and the level  
space at the bottom thick with  
oaks, willows etc. A spring at  
the head of the canyon yields a  
stream of pure water very soft -  
and beside the stream, beneath the  
trees, is Vargay's cooking tent with  
gasoline stove.

Blankets, provisions, cooking  
utensils, etc., were brought ashore,  
and a shark line thrown out for  
the guano men.

we camped at Ship's Harbor  
Monday night + Tuesday  
night, July 1 + 2, 1912  
and left for Santa Barbara  
Wed. July 3.

Thursday July 2, 1912

At five o'clock Captain Nasmy  
awoke the four sound sleepers in  
the tent, and in ten minutes we  
were enjoying a breakfast of corn-  
meal mush, bacon potatoes &  
coffee — and bread — And every  
one ate heartily. As soon as  
dishes were washed we  
took some provisions, the  
camera & field glasses, ran our  
skiff down the beach, hoisted  
rowed out to the launch, and  
weighed anchor.

We cruised our way to the  
east end of Santa Cruz Island,  
passing precipitous cliffs  
with intervening harbors  
some narrow, others, like



Prisoners Harbor, with boozys  
of beach, go E. we  
saw Dry Harbor, Cayabe  
H. Pelican Bay, Trunks #,  
Prisoners Harbor, China  
Harbor, Tallows Bay (Potato  
Harbor), Scorpion Harbor,  
Smuggler's Cove - latter at  
extreme end - San Pedro point  
is just n. of Smuggler's  
Cove.

There are 9 ranches on  
the Island - all getting empty  
(60 men. No women. Hadag)  
are at Prisoners Harbor. The  
Capt. Revelli lives there. At  
Prisoners Harbor is a wharf  
and a launch (the Santa Cruz)  
was at the wharf. There

this wharf they are shipping the  
5000 sheep on a steam schooner.  
After we had passed Prisoners Harbor  
we saw the steam schooner,  
Thomas L Ward putting in.

Off the eastern end of the Island  
and just n. of San Pedro Pt.  
we stopped the engine and  
drifted, fishing for deep sea fish.

We caught red snapper, 2  
bands rock cod, sheeps heads,  
white fish, rock bass, bluefish.

Mr. Mackie with his  
9 oz light tackle rod caught 3  
a small rock cod, a beautiful  
large rock bass and a superb  
white fish. Both the latter were  
gaffed. All hands fished using  
hook line. Twice sharks were



hooked but they let the hook  
off. The Indian got into the skiff  
which we had lowered out  
and it was fun to watch  
him fish. He caught seven,  
including a fine white fish  
+ 3 blue fish.

Wheaton began to feel  
sore so we started the  
engine and cruised around the  
east end of the island to try  
for Jewfish. We picked up  
Pearlless from San Pedro, a fish  
lunch, with a big skiff in tow.  
Here the water was smooth and  
Wheaton felt better.

Smugglers Cove has  
a couple of orchards and

the trail at the beach. (Capt  
Vasquez says that there are extensive  
~~apple~~ vineyards on the island  
— much to wine is made. And  
there are fruit trees of various  
sorts) (As we cruised along the  
north shore we saw three large  
bold-headed eagles — many  
seals on the rocky shore — at  
the top of the steepest cliffs were  
barbed wire fences — to keep the  
sheep from running over to destruction.  
Off the shore we passed near  
to the launch we thought was  
the Peerless. It turned out to be a  
Japanese fishing vessel, but we  
didn't get the name — prob from  
Hueneme.

We cast anchor here and  
put out a big hook for Jewfish



hauled mako Rock cod. Mr Mackey  
& the Indian put out in the  
skiff, to try for albacore, which  
were jumping. We were in  
the shallows.

Wheaton and Keith subsided  
at this anchorage. There was a  
gentle swell, and both boys  
lay on top of the cabin, pretending  
to take a siesta.

The sun came out (it  
was now 11:30) and the  
view was beautiful. The cliffs  
at the eastern end of the  
Island are high, of light  
yellow, and back of them is  
a high mt. <sup>1549</sup>1800 feet. To the  
east of us is Anacapa, a mountain  
in the sea, faint in the  
mist - <sup>1800 ft high</sup> 6 miles away - beautiful.

The sea, smooth with regular  
swell. The sea birds screaming  
as they plunge at a school fish.  
(On the way from camp this  
morning we saw great flocks of  
birds, loose schools of anchovies,  
which in turn were pursued by  
yellow-tail - and then great whales  
sprouting and showing great sheets  
of back and a big tail.

At twelve o'clock while we  
were still anchored, the Japanese  
boat came up to us - 6 Japanese  
on the Hueneme Maru. They had  
been fishing at Anacapa Island.

And then Mr Mackey hooked  
a Jew fish, and for an hour  
played him. It was great sport.  
Mr Mackey moved from the  
launch to the skiff. But the



Jaw fish snagged up with the  
kelp at the bottom and finally the  
line broke at the kelp, and the  
fish was gone.

Then we lost our big hook,  
with which we were trying  
for Jew Fish on a heavy  
line. Vasquez rowed out to  
the Anemone Thruway but they  
had no hooks big enough.  
So we put a ~~90~~ 90 (Wingoh)  
hook on our heavy line, and  
baited with a snail.

Then the Indian took a  
hand at a fish-line. He is  
a great sportsman and he  
caught 2 sculpin - small red  
bullhead looking fish with points  
to their fins that are  
extremely poisonous. He also

Caught a rock bass - Keith  
caught a white fish - a large  
one - and as a conclusion to  
the day's sport Wharton pulled up  
a 5 foot shark, landed in the  
line and in kelp. Capt Vasquez  
gaffed it.